Missouri Department of Mental Health
Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

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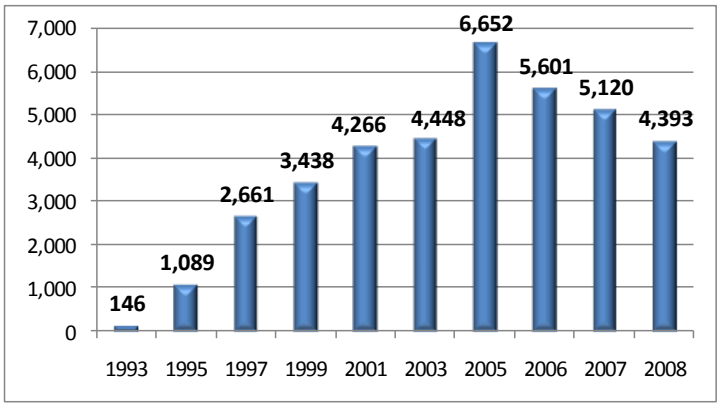
Mark Stringer
Division Director

Methamphetamine—Cost to Missouri

Its use can have effects such as psychosis, memory loss, violent behavior, and mood disturbances which can remain after cessation.[1] Its production generates toxic fumes, and its ingredients can ignite or corrode. In Missouri, methamphetamine production and use had explosive growth throughout the 1990's and maintained a strong foothold through the early years of this decade. Since 2001, the state has led the nation in the number of methamphetamine laboratory seizures. In rural Missouri, treatment admissions for methamphetamine addiction are only surpassed by that for alcohol and marijuana. Only recently has the state begun to realize some positive changes in terms of declines in both treatment admissions and the laboratory seizures.

Treatment Admissions in Missouri[2]



Demographics of the Meth User[3]

- ➔ 55% are male and 45% are female.
- ➔ 45% are between the ages of 18 and 29.
- ➔ 97% are Caucasian.
- ➔ 52% first use by age 18.
- ➔ 47% are referred to treatment from the criminal justice system.
- ➔ 33% are injection users—which presents an additional public health concern.

What Meth Costs Society: In 2008, a report was released providing cost estimates of methamphetamine for the United States. The best estimate was $23.3 billion with the largest portion for pain and suffering and premature death (71%) followed by crime and criminal justice (18%). The remaining burden hit the areas of health care and treatment (3.8%), productivity (2.9%), child endangerment (3.9%), and lab clean-up (0.3%).[4] Missouri accounts for 3.4% of the country's methamphetamine treatment admissions.[5]

Treating the Meth Addict: In Missouri, the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse provides programming for prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery management of substance abuse disorders through a statewide network of community-based service providers. Treatment is individualized based on the severity and chronicity of the user's condition. While there is no current pharmaceutical intervention for methamphetamine addiction, research has shown that behavioral interventions such as cognitive behavioral and contingency management interventions are most effective.[6]

In 2007, the state of Missouri applied for and received an Access to Recovery grant which provides federal funding for methamphetamine treatment and recovery support services. The grant also engages faith-based service providers in the rural areas where methamphetamine is most prominent. As of March 1, 2009, 2,291 Missouri meth users have been served through funding from this grant. Of those interviewed at 6 months after admission, 78% report no drug use.[3] Treatment for methamphetamine addiction is effective and far less costly than its overall burden on the State.

Sources:
[1]National Institute on Drug Abuse (revised September 2006). Research Report: Methamphetamine Abuse and Addiction.
[2]Admission data is based on users primary drug problem.
[3]Missouri Department of Mental Health database tabulation.
[4]The Economic Cost of Methamphetamine Use in the United States, 2005. RAND Drug Policy Research Center
[5]Treatment Episode Data Set (2006). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies.
[6]Research Report Series—Methamphetamine Abuse and Addiction. National Institute on Drug Abuse (www.drugabuse.gov).

For more information please contact the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse at (573)751-4942 or email: adamail@dmh.mo.gov